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Swedish Liberal Party Leader Resigns

The resignation of Liberal Party Chairman Gunnar Helen has prompted speculation that the party may modify its support of Prime Minister Palme's government. Helen's resignation, publicly ascribed to reasons of health but privately seen as a result of his stagnating leadership, will take effect in November.

Helen's leadership came under increasing criticism as the Liberals' identity blurred through a policy of collaboration with Palme's government. The Liberals agreed to relinquish their position as an opposition party and supported Prime Minister Palme in 1974. The party reaped no benefits from that support and has seen its popular appeal dwindle. The Liberals were the largest opposition party in the late 1960s, but slipped under Helen's chairmanship to a poor third.

Speculation concerning Helen's successor centers on Per Ahlmark, an active 36-year old party member whose strong opinions would inject some life into the moribund Liberals. Regardless of who succeeds Helen, there is likely to be serious Liberal consideration of modifying the policy of collaboration, probably resulting in a return to true opposition to Palme's government.

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Legacy of Colonial War Causes Friction Between France and Algeria

President Giscard's efforts to improve France's relations with Algeria are being impeded by problems left unresolved since the end of the bitter colonial war in 1962. A group of Algerian refugees who remain unassimilated after thirteen years in France have recently kidnapped local officials and occupied administrative offices to focus national attention on their twin grievances: continued isolation from French society and alledged harassment by the Algerian government.

When Algeria gained its independence in 1962, the harkis--Algerians who had sided with the French-became a prime target for the National Liberation Front and according to French estimates 10,000 were summarily executed. Some 200,000 fled to France where they opted for French citizenship. Coming mostly from remote areas in Algeria, they have had great difficulty in adapting to life in France and today about 7,000 harkis are still living in refugee camps that were established as temporary quarters thirteen years ago. Living conditions in the camps are primitive and most of the inhabitants are unemployed. The harkis, moreover, consider the camps a symbol of the French government's failure to help them assimilate completely into French society and of their own dependence on welfare aid.

In May some 200 harkis occupied the administrative offices of their camp to protest the poor conditions and in June four armed harkis held the director of their camp captive in the city hall of a nearby town. They demanded that the "camps of shame" be shut down and the "refugees" completely integrated into the national community.

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A permanent commission presided over by Minister of the Interior Poniatowski was established in June and early this month the government adopted its main recommendations:

- --the camps will be closed before the end of next year;
- --special programs will be instituted to provide vocational training and job placement for the harkis;
- --incentives will be provided for communities to take in refugee families and the <u>harkis</u> will be assured of housing.

Some of these measures will also apply to the 200,000 or so <u>harkis</u> outside of the camps, most of whom remain poorly integrated into French society.

Other harki demands, however, will prove more difficult for Paris to resolve. Earlier this month harkis seized several Algerian migrant workers in retaliation for the detention by Algerian authorities of a harki boy returning to France after visiting Algiers. When the boy was permitted to continue on his way to France, the workers were released unharmed, but the incident drew attention to a long-standing friction in French-Algerian relations. Harkis claim they cannot return to Algeria, even for short visits, for fear of arrest because of their support for France during the war. Furthermore, family members who remained in Algeria after the war are not allowed to join their relatives in France.

Giscard's warm welcome in Algeria last April and the improvement in relations between Paris and Algiers led the <u>harkis</u> to believe that, as French citizens, they would now be free to come and go as they pleased. The detention of the boy convinced them that nothing has changed--in spite of Algerian

protestations that it was simply a matter of the boy's travel papers not being in order--and they are determined to pressure the French government into supporting their cause.

Last Sunday a leader of the Algerian workers community near Lyon was kidnapped by harkis who demanded that Paris open negotiations with Algiers to establish free movement for ex-Algerians between France and Algeria. The Algerian migrant official was released on Monday after the French government agreed to meet a harki delegation to discuss their grievances. Militant harkis, however, have threatened to kill four Algerians for every member of a harki family detained in Algeria after the end of the month. Harkis claim that Algeria is currently preventing another boy and a mother with six children from returning to France after a visit.

France and Algeria need mutual support to achieve their main economic and political objectives. Algeria is a key to France's ambition to become the champion of the Third World--and especially of the Arab oil-producing states--in the West, while France remains Algeria's primary trading partner, the most likely source of future foreign investment, and an important safety valve for reducing unemployment at home.

Both sides have demonstrated during the past year a willingness to overcome minor obstacles and a sensitivity to potential problems. The harkis are being taken seriously, and an official of the French foreign ministry told the US embassy that Paris is determined to prevent this issue from clouding French-Algerian relations. He said the government, which has hitherto shown great tolerance, will clamp down on kidnappings and terrorist activity by the harkis.

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AFL-CIO Invites European Trade Unionists to Washington

An AFL-CIO invitation to selected European labor leaders to meet in the US in late October is being welcomed--but with apparent caution.

Last month President Meany invited the top officials of European democratic trade unions to stop over in Washington after attending the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) congress in Mexico City. Should all accept—which seems unlikely—the meeting would bring together the principal officer of leading federations of West Germany, the UK, France, Austria, Switzerland, Iceland, Ireland and all of the Scandinavian and Benelux countries.

The gathering will afford an opportunity to discuss matters "related to the future course of the trade union movement internationally." The AFL-CIO--and Meany personally--has long sharply disagreed with the viewpoint evident in certain European labor circles--such as the British Trades Union Congress--that a rapprochement with Soviet and East European trade union organizations is desirable and that contacts should be encouraged. Six years ago, this disagreement lead to a serious confrontation in the relationship between the American and European organizations and the AFL-CIO subsequently withdrew its membership.

The invitation is probably viewed by some Europeans as a conciliatory gesture, and the European union leaders with whom the US Embassy in Paris is in touch are pleased. Some of them, however, are concerned about the sensitivity of the AFL-CIO/ICFTU relationship--presumably a reference to alleged US domination of the organization in earlier years--and a number of them are delaying a response until the matter is

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discussed within ICFTU. An early opportunity to do so would be at the Austrian trade union congress in mid-September. An ICFTU representative was not invited to the October gathering, but Secretary General Kersten told US officials this week that a meeting has been scheduled between Meany and himself for early September. He expects the ICFTU invitation will be discussed then.

Kersten--speaking, of course, as an interested party--said he is apprehensive that ICFTU affiliates in developing countries might interpret a meeting between the Europeans and the AFL-CIO--coming right on the heels of one with them in Mexico--as possible collusion against their interests. He also mentioned that although some Europeans want to maintain close bilateral relations with the AFL-CIO, they want to avoid a multilateral meeting which might be seen as a weakening of ICFTU solidarity.

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Turkey Refuses Office for the Palestinian Liberation Organization
Efforts to establish an office of the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) in Turkey appear to have failed. A PLO delegation concluded its visit to Turkey on August 20th without reaching an agreement with the Demirel government for the opening of a PLO office in Ankara. The PLO recently established an office in the Greek Cypriot zone of Cyprus and had expressed an interest in establishing a similar branch in Ankara.
The Turkish press speculated that Prime Minister Demirel refused permission on the grounds that the PLO declined to open an office in the Turkish zone of Cyprus. Farouk Qaddoumi, who headed the PLO delegation, gave some weight to this speculation when he stated during a press conference that the PLO had already opened one office in Cyprus "and that was enough for the country."
The official explanation given by the Turkish Foreign Ministry was that the question of a PLO office was not seriously discussed and Turkey was not opposed to the opening of an office "sometime."

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West German and French Interior Ministers To Discuss Joint Action Against Terrorists

West German Interior Minister Werner Maihofer and his French counterpart, Michel Poniatowski, meet today to discuss further means to combat terrorists.

Bonn believes that international cooperation is necessary if its anti-terrorist campaign is to be effective. The West Germans have established contacts with security officials in Switzerland, Italy, Sweden, Denmark, Belgium, the Netherlands, and Great Britain, as well as with France. Maihofer has also discussed anti-terrorism measures with Spanish officials. Bonn reportedly will soon suggest that an EC Council of Ministers discuss the general topic of cooperation in the field of anti-terrorism.

Among other topics, Maihofer and Poniatowski will consider methods by which the countries can exchange information concerning terrorist activities. Maihofer reportedly will ask that this exchange become automatic.

The two ministers presumably will discuss the recent bombing attacks on French nuclear power plants. A group that calls itself the "Kommando Ulrike Meinhof und Puig Antich" claimed responsibility for one of the attacks, and there is speculation that West German terrorists are "practicing" in France for an attack against a West German nuclear power facility. ultimate objective is to free the <u>Baader-Meinhof</u> group now standing trial in Stuttgart.

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